

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, SOCI

SUBJECT: 33D SESSION--HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC)

1. ON JANUARY 18 AT THE INITIATIVE OF SWEDEN, THE WEOG MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (HRC) MET TO DISCUSS WEOG STRATEGY FOR THE UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETING. THE GROUP WHICH INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE UK, FRG, AUSTRIA, ITALY, CANADA, SWEDEN AND THE US REVIEWED THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA ITEM BY ITEM WITH THE FOLLOWING RESULTS.

A. ITEM 1, ELECTIONS--THE EASTERN EUROPEANS ARE EXPECTED TO NOMINATE THE BULGARIAN REP (WHO SERVED AS VICE CHAIRMAN LAST YEAR FOR THE CHAIRMANSHIP. THE WEO GROUP WILL MEET IN GENEVA BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION TO AGREE UPON A CANDIDATE FOR WEOG VICE CHAIRMANSHIP,

ALTHOUGH THE ITALIAN REP IS LIKELY CHOICE. DAVID BROAD OF THE UK WILL ARRANGE THE GENEVA WEOG MEETING.

B. ITEM 5, CHILE--THE FRG EXPRESSED ITS STRONG INTEREST IN ACHIEVING A TEXT ON WHICH THE FRG COULD
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VOTE "YES," AND INDICATED THAT IT CONSIDERED NEGOTIATING SUCH A TEXT AT GENEVA "WORTHWHILE." THE UK ALSO ENCOURAGED WESTERN SOLIDARITY ON THIS ITEM AND ANNOUNCED THAT IT IS PREPARING A DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR GENEVA AND WILL BE SOLICITING WEOG COSPONSORSHIP.

C. ITEM 6, SOUTH AFRICA--SEVERAL COUNTRIES CON-

SIDERED IT WORTHWHILE FOR WEO TO CONSULT WITH THE AFRICANS ABOUT FORMULATING A RESOLUTION ON THIS ITEM WHICH WEOG COULD SUPPORT. BROAD OF THE UK ENCOURAGED WEOG COUNTRIES TO MAKE STRONG SPEECHES INDICATING SUPPORT OF AFRICAN GOALS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, REGARDLESS OF THE NATURE OF THE TABLED RESOLUTION. WITH REGARD TO ITEM 6(B) (HRC RESOLUTION 6(XXXII)) BROAD URGED THAT WEOG MEMBERS WORK TO KEEP THE VETO ISSUE ALIVE IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE SOVIET/EASTERN EUROPEAN EMBARRASSMENT.

D. ITEM 11, POLITICAL PRISONERS--WE QUERIED THE CONSPONSORS (AUSTRIA, ITALY, UK, FRG) OF OUR RESOLUTION ON AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD OVER FROM LAST YEAR ON THEIR VIEWS AS TO THE ADVISABILITY OF PRESSING THE RESOLUTION AT THIS YEAR'S MEETING. ALL ENCOURAGED US TO GO AHEAD WITH IT AND OPINED THAT THE SOVIET MIGHT CONSTRUE ANY BACKING-OFF AS A REACTION TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE BATTLE OVER THE SWEDISH RESOLUTION. ALTHOUGH THE SWEDES CLEARLY INTEND TO AVOID BEING ASSOCIATED WITH OUR AMNESTY DRAFT, THEY FEEL IT WOULD IN NO WAY JEOPARDIZE THEIR RESOLUTION AND MIGHT EVEN HELP BY EMPHASIZING THE COMPROMISE NATURE OF THEIR PROPOSAL. THE UK ALSO BELIEVES THAT EVEN IF WE ARE FORCED TO WITHDRAW OUR DRAFT AFTER NEGOTIATION, IT WILL CONSTITUTE NO LOSS OF CREDIBILITY AND MAY STRENGTHEN THE WEOG POSITION ON THE SWEDISH DRAFT AT THE 32D GA.

E. ITEM 11, TORTURE--THE FRG CIRCULATED AN IN-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORMAL DRAFT ON THIS ITEM, A COPY OF WHICH HAS BEEN POUCHED TO IO/HR, HEWITT. BROAD OF THE UK MENTIONED A 1974 STATEMENT BY SECRETARY KISSINGER URGING THE SETTING UP OF A SPECIAL STUDY GROUP ON TORTURE, AND SUGGESTED THAT IF THE US CONTINUED TO PUSH THAT IDEA, THE FRG PROPOSAL MIGHT BENEFIT BY APPEARING TO BE A MORE ATTRACTIVE COMPROMISE.

F. ITEM 12(B)--THE UK CHARACTERIZED THIS YEAR'S MEETING AS A "MAKE OR BREAK" SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE ENFORCEMENT OF 1503. WE EMPHASIZED THE PRIORITY THAT THE US GIVES THIS ITEM AND EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN THAT THE SUB-COMMISSION RESOLUTION I CALL FOR A REVIEW OF 1503 PROCEDURES NOT BE USED TO WEAKEN THEM. THE UK CIRCULATED AN INFORMAL DRAFT INTENDED AS A "DEFENSE" AGAINST SUCH AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SUB-COMMISSION RESOLUTION (COPY POUCHED IO/HR, HEWITT). ALL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP AGREED THAT WEOG SHOULD FOCUS ON ONE OR TWO OF THE COUNTRIES AGAINST WHICH 1503 COMPLAINTS

HAVE BEEN FILED, AND PUSH FOR INVESTIGATION OF VIOLATIONS IN THAT COUNTRY. THE FRG SUGGESTED EQUATORIAL GUINEA AS A POSSIBLE TARGET ALTHOUGH THE SWEDES AND ITALIANS ARE SKETICAL ABOUT FOCUSING ON AN AFRICAN COUNTRY.

G. ITEM 17(B), APARTHEID--BROAD URGED THAT WEOH COUNTRIES CONTINUE TO ABSTAIN ON THIS ITEM EVEN IF THE TABLED RESOLUTION LOOKS CLEAN. HE OPINED THAT SUPPORT OF SUCH A RESOLUTION WOULD REMOVE THE ONE WEO LEVER AT THE GHANA CONFERENCE PREPARATORY MEETING. THE SWEDES DISAGREED BUT ADMITTED THAT THEY THOUGHT STOCKHOLM MIGHT GO ALONG WITH THE ABSTENTION.

H. ITEM 18, INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS--THE UK PRESENTED AN INFORMAL DRAFT ON THIS ITEM AND SUGGESTED THAT SWEDEN AND CANADA TAKE THE LEAD ON ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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